

Dillsburgh Courier

SPORTS

The Sports Beat

By WENDELL SMITH

Rain, Rain, Go Away, Little Alex Wants, etc. . . .

DETROIT—Senor Alex Pompez, the cool Cuban from Havana, chewed viciously on his stooge and moaned a woe tune as the rain came filtering down from overcast skies here at Briggs Stadium Sunday afternoon.

"Look!" wailed the handsome Latin. "Another Sunday of rain. I have never seen anything like it. These rains, they seem to be following the New York Cubans' baseball team every place. Three straight Sundays we have been rained out at the Polo Grounds in New York, and now it is raining here." Obviously, Senor Pompez was more than het up over the unfavorable weather conditions. He is used to the sunny days and balmy breezes of his beloved Havana. "I have never seen such weather since I started bringing teams here from Cuba more than twenty years ago," the Senor growled.

"These rains keep up, I am going to send the ball players back to Cuba and bring over a swimming team. Personally, I do not like swimming, but I must put something in Mr. Stoneham's Polo Grounds."

No one can blame Senor Alex for dropping a few salty tears among the raindrops, because everything has gone against him so far this season. It seems that Mother Luck and Father Sun have, for some strange reason, given him the brush-off. When the season started he had the best-balanced ball club in the Negro National League. He had an excellent pitching staff, a good infield, and a whale of an outfield. During the winter he got the Polo Grounds' contract and everything looked rosy. But all that glitters is not gold. If you don't believe it, just ask Senor Pompez. His ball club is now cemented in the Negro National League cellar, and rain has forced him to postpone three of his big games in New York this weekend.

Alex Pompez "Not only am I having trouble with these rains," commented Alex, "but my ball club, she is suffering with injuries. I have the best team in baseball, but we are never together so far this year. Right now, seven of my best players are hurt, and some of those who are playing are all bandaged up. My best pitcher, Dave Barnhill, has a sore arm, and six others look like they are veterans of World War II."

Few Cuban Players Available . . .

"We look very bad today," the Senor moaned recently as the Birmingham Black Barons added their fifth run in the first game as the Cubans none, "because we do not have a real team on the field. We have no pitchers in the outfield, no fielding, catching, playing the infield, and so on, everything. It is bad weather. There are 44,000 people here this afternoon, and my club, she looks terrible! I do not like that. Cubans? I have been known to have a good baseball team and always I want one. People say, 'Alex Pompez always brings a good baseball team to the States.' But today they will say Alex Pompez does not bring such a good baseball team to the States this year."

The dejected, despondent Latin was so perplexed he reminded you of a man facing the electric chair. "What should I do?" he begged with a helpless note in his voice. Why couldn't he send an SOS to Cuba for some help? Aren't there more Cuban players where these came from? "All the good players in Cuba are here in the States," he mumbled. "The big league teams are taking most of them now, and I have a very small field to pick from. There was a time when I could get all I wanted, but these Cincinnati Reds, Washington Senators, and minor league teams are taking them like anything."

"I guess I'll just have to wait until all my players get well," Pompez said. "That may be a long time, but I will wait. My first baseman, Davey Thomas, has been out for a long time now. He broke his wrist, and he cannot lift bat or catch a ball. That is very bad. He is not only a good pleaser, but the key player in our infield. When he comes back we will get going, but I don't know when he will return." The Senor puffed on his stogy, heaved a deep sigh, and added, "Linares has a bum ankle, Brooks has a leg, Scantlebury's arm is sore, Clark's arm is sore, and Noble a broken finger. The whole 'dem' team is on crutches, and I am going to go to the hospital from worry."

He Has a Team of Cripples . . .

As Senor Pompez gave out with his troubles, the rain started coming down in buckets. Umpire Pryor finally had to call the second contest in the fifth, with Birmingham leading, 4 to 0. That was about as much as he could take in one day. "Once again we are beaten by the rain," he said indignantly, "and once again I am very unhappy. If this keeps up, I am going to buy a set of bathing suits. I do not think I should get some ducks and start a circus."

"If you are one of the men who want rain, I am going to tell them about my ball club. I will bring them to my farm for a small fee and guarantee them rain within one hour. We never fail. Our record stands for itself." Senor Pompez yanked his soft brown fedora down over his eyes, gave his belt a rude jerk, and started heading toward the dressing room. "I am going in here to see who got hurt today," he explained. "If this keeps up I will have to put on a uniform. I can't get in the dressing room half the time for doctors, and we use so much rubbing alcohol I run every time I see a saloon. Why, one of my players used so much rubbing alcohol he became saturated with it, and one day he never showed up for a game. I was very mad when I caught up with him, and I demanded to know why he hadn't turned up that day."

"He said he smelled so much of alcohol that the man on the gate at the park wouldn't let him in. The man said my player was drunk. Now, what do you think of that?"

There was never a better-liked man in baseball than Senor Pompez; and you cannot help but feel sorry for his plight. That's why everyone who knows him is pulling for him. They want to see him get a good break for a change.

As we left the park, Senor Pompez stopped to buy a paper. "What does it say about the weather for tomorrow?" someone asked.

"What does it always say?" demanded the Senor. "Rain, of course!"

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JAMES FORD, MEMPHIS STAR, HITS ARBITER

CHICAGO—James Ford, third baseman of the Memphis Red Sox, got away with "murder" here last Sunday at Wrigley Field when he slugged Umpire Roy Young during a game between Memphis and Cincinnati, and was only fined \$50 by J. B. Martin, president of the Negro American League.

Ford became involved in a dispute with the umpire in the ninth inning after Reese "Goose" Tatum had scored, while the Memphis team was chasing Alex Radcliffe from third base back to second.

The first pitch of the game, however, was a single off the bat of Medina, one of baseball's greatest sines.

President Martin, however, was

in the sun and the Memphis player off

with a mere \$50 fine. Memphis

won both games, 4 to 3 in twelve

innings, and 3 to 0 in seven stan-

ding.

Tatum, run put the Clowns in

front, 2 to 1, in the ninth of the

first game, but it was short-lived

because Neil Robinson tied it up

in the Memphis half of the ninth

with a 340-foot home run in the

left field reaches to tie the knot.

The first pitch of the game, however,

was a single off the bat of Medina,

the Venezuelan hurler of the

Clowns, Medina being relieved in

the twelfth after two were out

the score tied, and two on the

sacks. Red Longley greeted John

Williams, who had relieved Medina

with a single scoring Casey Jones

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